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## omen

Volume 23, Issue 5  
November 19, 2004

### layout & editing

Jesse Frola	Abortion Shots
Abby Ohlheiser	Molotov Cocktail
Michael Petersen	Milk!
Libby Reinish	Girly Drink
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THIS OFFICIAL ONLY HAVE

Front and back  
covers  
by Shalin  
Scupham, Art  
Director

Views in the Omen (5)

Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)

### FUCK UPS:

Last issue, we published two articles without by lines. "Why you should Write for the OMEN", printed on page 8, was written by Leila Higgins. Brendan McQuade wrote the article on page 4. Apologies to you both.



Cows were put on this earth  
in order to shit on the Omen

## to submit

Submissions are due Saturdays before 5 p.m. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by diskette (Mac or IBM), and typed hard copies will also be accepted, reluctantly. Label your disks well and they will get back to you. Get your stuff to Abby Ohlheiser, Merrill C202, x4566. You may also use e-mail. Send e-mail submissions to [awo03@hampshire.edu](mailto:awo03@hampshire.edu)

And be sure to read our policy  
box at the bottom of the next  
page before submitting.

Visit the Omen's very simple  
website at [omen.hampshire.edu](http://omen.hampshire.edu)

Quote Attributed to Omen Staff

## Editorial

"To director Ron Fricke, [Baraka] is 'a journey of rediscovery that plunges into nature, into history, into the human spirit and finally into the realm of the infinite.' (Fine for most children over 10)."

- From a summary of Baraka, as printed in a Cinestudio flyer.

"Important -- Movies will ruin your marriage"

-SPAM email subject line found in my mailbox

I am not a good editorial writer. I did see some movies this week. "Reviews" ensue.

### I Heart Huckabees

I loved it, and so did the girl in the fur coat sitting in front of me. She thought that the trailer for the new Almoldovar movie was the beginning of the feature. I hope that we liked this movie for different reasons. Judging by her reaction to the movie, it is safe and fun for the whole family. I am a snob.

### The Incredibles

I can recognize Jason Lee's voice anywhere. I went to see him in a movie done by the people responsible for Meet The Parents just because I like him so much. If you read any other review of this picture, they will tell you how wonderful it is. It lived up to the expectations that those reviews set for me. My favorite moment involved Mr. Incredible bitching about the celebration of medi-

ocrity after Mrs. Incredible upbraids him because he can't attend his son's 4th grade graduation.

This summer, when I went to see the Michael Moore film, I had an incredible experience. The audio in the theatre was at a very high volume, and when the THX chord (the one that gets louder and higher) finished, all our seats were shaking. Half the theatre moaned. I think there was some sort of collective orgasm. Every time I go to a movie with stadium seating, I think about it and wonder if theatres should know about their untapped power.

### The Five Obstructions

**Premise:** Lars von Trier asks Jørgen Leth to remake his short film, The Perfect Human, five times under five different sets of rules, or obstructions. Lars von Trier once studied under Leth, claims to have seen The Perfect Human over 20 times, and holds Leth in extremely high regard. The film combines documentary and interview with the five obstructions.

The obstructions, von Trier says in the beginning, are supposed to "ruin" a "perfect film." You find out his other motivations as the film progresses.

Example of one obstruction: von Trier tells Leth to set it in Cuba, shoot on-location, answer the unanswered questions in the original film's narrative, and allow only 12 frames (less than one second) between edits.

The original short is black-and-white and shot on a white set.

It was worth the drive to Hartford; the movie is at Real Art Ways until next Wednesday.



## policy

The Omen is Hampshire's longest-running bi-weekly publication, established by Stephanie Cole in December of 1992. In the past, submissions have included students' perspectives on the campus, administration, news, movie reviews, commentary, short fiction, satire, first born, artwork, comics, and the occasional embarrassing self-promotion. Everything the Omen receives, provided it is sent from a member of the Hampshire community, will be published unless it is deemed libelous or defamatory. Although we find such things amusing and entertaining for countless hours, it is just not an option in this forum. Libel will be considered clearly false or unsupportable writing that maliciously damages a person's reputation.

The Omen will not edit anything you write

(except spelling and grammar). You must sign your real name (no anonymous submissions) and understand that you are responsible for what you say. Nonetheless, views in the Omen do not necessarily represent the views of anyone, anywhere, living or dead.

There is no Omen staff, save those positions of editor-in-chief and layout editor. To qualify for community service you must be a consistent contributor and help regularly with layout. Layout times (and such) will be discussed at our meetings. Meetings are held every Tuesday after release of an issue in the Kiva at 9PM. Everyone, everywhere, living or dead, should come.

The Omen loves you.





# SELECTION SPEAK

## WRITING ABOUT THE ELECTION IS GOOD FOR YOU

**G**iven that there was a request for election postmortems in the last issue, I figured I might as well throw mine into the ring as well. Of course, I have lost my sense of time and am probably past the deadline, so this will probably end up showing up after everyone else's comments on the election. (If so, fuck it, it's not like there aren't going to be 900 articles on this topic in every Hampshire-sponsored publication for the next four years.)

I imagine there will be a myriad amount of different responses. The smug Republican (the only one on campus) gloating over Bush's "historic mandate" and telling us limp-wristed liberal pussies to "get the hell over it" and shut the fuck up. The bitter pessimists lamenting the fact that they have become alienated from their fellow countrymen (apologies to my female readers, but I just can't bring myself to type the word "countrypeople") and openly contemplating a move out of the country. The fiery idealists who implore us to "fight back" now more than ever and "take back our country." (How? A coup d'etat? Bush won by three million votes! And even if he lost by three million votes, I doubt a handful of Hampshire students taking a bus to DC is suddenly going to convince him to resign the Oval Office.) The conspiracy theorists who will weave scattered reports of computer glitches in Ohio together into a Diebold manufactured attempt to seize the White House, ignoring the fact

that even if Kerry won Ohio or Florida, he still would have lost the popular vote. And, finally, my personal favorite: the crazed motherfucker who rages against Middle America and obliquely namedrops famous Presidential assassins. (Brownie points go to whoever forgoes the painfully obvious Lee Harvey Oswald or John W. Hinckley allusion in favor of a reference to Charles Guiteau or Leon Czolgosz — America's forgotten heroes, as opposed to Hinckley who, quite frankly, let us all down.)

As for my political beliefs, I would also count myself as one of the "liberal, but not an activist" types. I'm currently registered as a Pacific Green, but I voted for Kerry. I'm not the heavy-duty leftist I was in high school, but I still consider myself left-wing enough to openly and unapologetically identify as a socialist. However, I must admit I've grown somewhat disillusioned with politics. It seems that most people are pretty hard-wired into their political positions (I do not except myself from this) and that discussions with Republicans are about as fruitful as having a "religious discussion" with a Jehovah's Witness, whereas discussions with my fellow liberals are nothing more than boring "me, too" circle jerks. I've also learned another thing in my dalliances with politics. There are two types of political animals: the corrupt politicians who will say and do anything to gain power and the well-meaning, principled utopian "activists" that have wonderful abstract ideas about how

by Michael Petersen

the world should work, but are so committed to them that they often willfully blind themselves to reality. The second type of person stands no chance in the current political system, mainly because of how the system works but also because their "enthusiasm" tends to alienate them from the (a)political mainstream.

As a result of my experiences I have become fairly apolitical, at least by the standards of this campus. I did somewhat follow the election in hopes of a Kerry victory, I admit. I also admit I got suckered. After resigning myself to four more years when Bush took a healthy lead after the convention, I got my hopes up when Kerry won the debates and pulled into a dead heat. I was even more optimistic on the election's eve after seeing Zogby

call the election for Kerry and seeing the early exit polls come in. Even when it became clear that Bush was going to win the popular vote, I held out a glimmer of hope that Kerry might capture Ohio. When Bush's lead continued to hold, I fooled myself into believing that the provisional ballots could possibly pull the state into Kerry's orbit. When none of these scenarios materialized, it was a kick in the stomach. The only reason I even was able to get up and attend my first class was because I had a group composition to perform and I didn't want to let my partner down. As a result, the second class of the day went for the chop. (Sorry, Sura.) The only solace I found was in the bitter, malicious and often hilarious rants that were cropping up on the Ruthless

Forum.

So how do I feel a week later? Well, the initial sting is not as strong, but it is there all the same. Things in my state actually improved somewhat. True, the two initiatives I cared most about: medical marijuana and gay marriage both went the other way, proving that even "progressive" Oregon is as bigoted and ignorant as the rest of the country. However, the Democrats recaptured the state Senate (now if only they could recapture a spine) and the community college bond miraculously passed, which might mean my father *might* get a raise for the first time in about three years. It also might signal that we are finally coming to the end of the whole Bill Sizemore anti-tax cock ride that Oregon has been on since I have been in elementary school.

The country itself, however, is pretty much fucked. If this were a repeat of 2000, where Bush was clearly rejected by the American people, I could live with another four years. The real sting comes from the fact that the American people actually elected this man and the reasons that they did so make me sick. I will be the first to admit that I am largely an ignoramus when it comes to economic and foreign policy issues. I am automatically distrustful of anyone who claims to have a silver bullet as even a single aspect of the economy is mind-bogglingly complex and I do not believe we can even come close to approaching perfection. Nevertheless, there is one issue in which my opinions are absolutely crystal clear: there is **no** good reason to ban gay marriage. None at all.

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## Clean Up You Goddamn Shit!

**A** few days ago I walked outside and something felt different about the campus. I did not recognize it at first, but then I looked down at the ground "holy mighty mother of fuck, the campus is clean!" I would like to personally thank everyone responsible for it, the place looks great without trash.

At first I thought that perhaps the cigarette disposal units were not placed at strategic student smoking points, maybe, just maybe the trash cans were half a click away from the dorms. But no, that was not the problem, it was sheer laziness. Now, don't get me wrong, it can be great to be a lazy slack-ass bastard, yes I can admit to having left a stray cigarette butt on the quad, but for fuck's sake the ashan is right there and it is surrounded by cigarette butts.

Yes, it is a drag to carry around an emptied forty, but make some effort to get rid of the bloody things someplace other than the ground behind the dorms. It makes the place look like we're white trash. If you find it to be that much of a strain to carry a soda can the extra 200 feet then put it in your backpack or a pocket. And if you are compelled to leave a beer bottle on the ground, don't smash it. People walk around here in really thin flip-flops, socks or just plain bare feet. Well, then again beer bottle calltrops may have an effect on the ever present odor of feet, but I digress. Breaking glass on a path is an asshole thing to do. And if there is an ashan nearby, please do not look at it as threading a needle. Just put the thing in the weird looking black phallic object and be done with it so that the front of the dorms is not paved in filters. It's gross.

by Raff Kenney

News, Commentary,  
Announcements,  
Propaganda,  
Editorials.



# THE UNMAKING OF A COLLEGE?

## WHY A CURRENT ACADEMIC POLICY AT HAMPSHIRE MAY FAIL

by Andrew Youngkins

[Some quick background: under the Division I system of the F01 generation and several previous, students had to do 4 Div Is in any of the following: IA, HACU, NS, CS, SS, Quantitative Analysis, or foreign language. Div Is were a) independent projects evaluated by a professor, or b) the "2 Course Option", two courses in that school, QA or language. You had to do at least two Div I projects, you had the option of doing four.]

That Div I system enabled students to be successful in their Div IIs.

It gave them research skills both broad and deep. In fact, the process involves a gradual constriction in scope, from breadth to depth. By the end of the Div I project, one is to be considered an expert in one's question, problem or invention.

It allowed people to practice revision. One can literally complete a Division II without revising a paper, unless the quality of the assignment is poor enough to warrant forced revision. In Division III, revision is never a question, it is an inevitability.

It builds familiarity with a process of applying to work with faculty members, even before they have to do so in Div II. It makes you argue specifically, and it makes you argue for a specific idea, then justify that notion to the same person. This is not a fundamental requirement of Division II, or why one works with a Division II member. In Division II, you look for two individuals who are interested in a set of common

interests, problems, issues, etc., and demonstrate how a wide variety of tasks or classes fit into some kind of framework: but you are NOT FORCED to come to any final certainty. Division III forces you to justify projects on the basis of practical results (in the case of computer assignments, philosophy theses, research-based study, etc.), and or some assumed unity (as in a collection of shorter works). The point here is that Div I built up a certain amount of experience talking to faculty members in a fundamentally different way than one had done, or will do until Division III. The critical process was quite different. And any F01, S02 or previous years' student could tell you so.

Things were pretty cool 3 years ago. People agree, we slept and studied and fucked and freaked out about work and didn't get evals and got evals and cried and laughed and, sometimes, gave birth. We imagined our Division Is as miniature Div IIIs, hoping that one day we would all have the honor of doing our own big projects.

That's the Candyland version of the first-year experience before the Plan. In reality, lots of people didn't make it through their first year at Camp Hamp, because they didn't like the social environment, the physical layout (or simply the living conditions), or the academic offerings. We also had friends who came here, had to take tons of loans or pay out of their own savings, and then never came back. We were sad for them, and for our loss.

The point is that neither version is absolute or describes our situation exactly, that the truth lies somewhere in between.

The academic system at Hampshire has been justified on the basis of a bell-like structure which started you at a certain level or specificity, marked a descent into a particular concentration, and a rise back up into an even more concentrated look at one problem. In essence, any question at the Div I level had an analogue at the Div III level, except Division III was the less sophomoric effort. Under the First Year Plan this is no longer true, and we have adopted a more traditional 'pyramid' approach which characterizes most liberal arts programs. In the 'pyramid', first-year courses are simply structural supports for later work, prerequisites, never 'events' or causes celebres. That's what completing Div Is used to be, a real party, a cause for intoxication or excitement; now the only "celebration" is completing a Div I retrospective, which we're sure everyone loves. While the jury may still be out on whether the Div I retrospective is completely useless or simply mostly useless, we do know that it takes up both students' and professors' hours in affirming a kind of unity in Division I that wasn't there to begin with.

The argument for the current Div I system, the one based upon retention, is a red herring. This is not to say that retention rate is not of real concern to students and members of the

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# HELP! I'M TRAPPED IN THE MORGUE! (UN) LIFE ON G4

Hello everyone. I'm Tristan Athearn-Hess. But today I'm not here to talk to you as an unfamous actor. I'm here to talk to you about a very important issue: Dakin G4. It is a morgue. I am constantly surrounded by the walking dead. The lounge fridge is full of partially eaten carcasses, I can hear the low moaning of the undead on a regular basis and the rotting corpses that are my hallmates leave a permanent stench in the hall. I never asked to be up here, oh no. I was bumped up here after my roommate and I were booted out of the G1 Lounge. G1 was an incredibly awesome floor, with a fridge and actual living people that socialized! SOCIALIZED FOR GODS/GAIAS/BUDDHAS/ETC.'S SAKE! Needless to say, it wasn't an improvement. I've only ever found one use for my hallmates: agriculture. Their rotting corpses make excellent fertilizer. You should see some

of the cabbages I can grow in their rotting chest cavities. The only problems are: 1) sometimes harvesting can be difficult when my hallmates refuse to stay still and 2) I sometimes get dandelions growing in my fertilizer. God damn fucking dandelions. You know, an interesting thing about dandelions is that they are NOT native to the Americas! They were brought over by the European colonists as an alternative food source. What a great decision that turned out to be, eh? Damned colonists. It's their fault that America is in the sorry shape it is. If it wasn't for them, America would have been much better off. Lets face it, the Europeans don't exactly have a stellar record with colonization, do they? Look at Africa and Australia! Africa has the slave trade and now the AIDS epidemic. 'nuff said. Australia has its own problems. Australia, a beautiful

place with wide stretches of open land roamed by the herds of the mighty and majestic wombats, was filled with English prisoners. Normally this would be fine, except for the fact that because of this we have such movies as Crocodile Dundee II and Kangaroo Jack. While I'm on the subject of movies, allow me this moment to talk about the fall of George Lucas. This poor man should be kept away from a movie set and given a nice new white jacket and a room with rubber walls. For my evidence I present exhibits A, B and B1/2. Conversely, Episodes I, II and the trailer for episode III of the hit documentary, Star Wars. In conclusion, it is the decision of this court that a one mile restraining order be put into effect. At no time are any pickles to be within one mile of any pickle jar, and I think babies are ugly. Court is adjourned.

I'm sorry, what was I talking about?



# HELP! WALTER SULLIVAN'S AFTER ME!

## AN INFORMAL WHINE

by Justin Read

For those of you who were expecting a normal article, even by the Omen's standards, please look elsewhere. I'm here to complain to you about the fact that as of late a serial killer has been roaming the Hampshire campus trying to murder me. His name is Walter Sullivan, and I don't know why he has it out for me. I saw him just last week hanging out on the G2 hallway. I had just come back from dinner and I saw him standing by the door of my room, holding a pistol in one hand and a large chainsaw in the other. I must have made some noise,

like a scream, or a phrase along the lines of, "Aw, fuck!" because he turned, grinned at me, and then rushed forward, raising his chainsaw. I whirled around and tore down the stairs and out of Dakin. When I finally stopped running and looked back, I didn't see anyone. I have seen him a few times since then, though; once, when I was checking my snail mail. I almost lost my head to his chainsaw. Another time he chased me through the basement of Merrill C. The last time I saw him, he was playing video games in the G2 lounge.

Walter stands about 6'1,

with shoulder length blond hair and gray eyes. He sports a rust blue, blood-stained trench-coat. If you happen to see this guy somewhere around the campus, don't get near him. I suspect he's always carrying that pistol. Don't try and report him to Public Safety either. They'll give you funny looks that you no doubt want to give me. And one more thing: Stay away from video games for a few days. Walter seems to have some connection to those...





# THE MAGNIFICENCE OF FRAUDULENT VOTES AND INTIMIDATION

Hopefully, you found that title amusing. Clearly, I'm trying to further the readership of my article at the expense of the title of that lecture by Prof. Jim Miller, organized by the Hampshire College Republicans. However, I'm not about to bash capitalism or the Republicans. Rather, I'm here to point out an inconsistency in the free-market system: suffrage.

Let's be honest, in the aftermath of (Re)Election '04, we've come to hear countless bitter criticisms of the democratic process. Some have even gone so far as to say that 'democracy sucks REAL BAD' and governance should be outsourced to the papacy.

Let's look at the facts: Americans have had to labor through ridiculously long queues just to get that one measly vote in and in the end it turned out that a ridiculously large amount of 'dumb' (Daily Mirror) people decided to vote this time and screw things up. Clearly, the greater good (we will assume this is Kerry for the purposes of this article and my social life) may have been achieved had they been forcibly deprived of their suffrage, although this is *perhaps* politically unfeasible.

Now, for anyone who's a student of economics, this must be starting to sound fairly familiar. People using up something when they ought not to? This, of course, is a classic case of *inefficient resource allocation* (which, coincidentally, shortens to IRA!)

which is often a problem of centrally-planned economies.

Yes, those long-since extinct 2nd World'ers were expressing a similar skepticism and frustration at the long queues, need-less bureaucracy and general inefficiency, only this time, the commodity in question was more likely to be bacon than votes.

**Instead of wasting millions of dollars in the form of rallies, ads and conventions ... It would be infinitely more efficient if these people were honest and this money was used to buy your vote in the literal sense.**

This follows nicely in to my next point. Your intangible, inalienable vote has – you guessed it! – become somewhat of a commodity of late. Clearly, the democratic process is being subverted by ill-meaning people who want nothing more than to cling on to power. So who do we call in when we need to exploit selfishness for the greater good of mankind? The invisible-hand of free-market economics of course!

Instead of wasting millions of dollars in the form of rallies, ads and conventions on re-iterating all this cheesy politics aimed at swindling your political capital, it would be infinitely more efficient if these people were honest and

this money was used to buy your vote in the literal sense. So here's how the system would work:

1.) You can register your vote on an internet-based 'All-American Vote Index.' (Think of a vote as being a share of a company.)

2.) The 'Demand-Phase' will follow, during which politicians (like investors) will express their desire for a particular vote and in doing so, in the fruition of economic theory, a price will be determined for each vote, by state.

3.) Once these prices have been determined, any citizen should be allowed to purchase votes on behalf of a Presidential candidate.

4.) 'Inalienably,' you have the final say on your vote and the choice to sell is ultimately yours. You may also donate your vote and bypass any monetary gain if you choose to be selfless.

Now, we can't deprive people of their right to vote, despite the fact that each half of this country seems fairly depressed – to put it mildly – that the other half took the time to vote. However, how do we really know that 'they' aren't correct? We don't, for sure, so I say let economics be the judge. The temptations of money always seem to bring out the best in people.

So here's how I think the process would unfold.

1.) Democrats would set up 'voter-unions' in Red States to prevent low-income voters from being exploited by ill-meaning Republicans. This would artifi-

**Continued on page 11**



## CAMPAIGN PRINCIPLES

9:31pm by the laptop o'clock. Bush ahead in the media polls by about 40 electoral votes. Midwest is red, northeast is blue. Yesterday-i.e. Monday-I called this shit for president Kerry whilst talking with my high-school ex on the phone.

"I fucked up my absentee ballot request," I told her. "So I took the train home from Boston to get another ballot in person, to be a part of getting this man into office. I guarantee he's going to win."

The ex and I have a history of giving each other pretty good advice, so she confided in my optimism, believed me when I talked about Bush's truly pathetic place in the polls.

"John Zogby declared it on the Daily Show, and damn it that program isn't the most reputable news show around."

Less credible were the yutzes on CNN's Crossfire who for once lay down their partisan sausage-waving and waved Kerry into the Oval Office. Surprising, sirs, and although I distrust you significantly less than the Daily Show, I am nothing if not intrigued by your unison.

So too, the blurb in the daily Boston Metro mentioning a group of astrologers in India who foresaw Kerry the president-to-be. The stars named to his fortune had eclipsed those of Bush into a dull and smoky fate.

"I'm calling it now", I say. "Really? You're sure?" She's into it. We both are.

"Definitely". Right now there's a glass of

amaretto sitting on the table in my apartment's tv room. Wedged underneath is a piece of newspaper, shaped not unlike a two-dimensional potted plant, with these simple words:

"Kerry's Victory Swill"

10pm now and John Stewart is on my screen. He is so damn sexy. Please John, please tell me how it's gonna go. Yes, Iraq may in fact be making fun of us. Oh crap, 170 Bush to 112 Kerry. That is, I would be saying 'Oh crap' if I gave any credence to this early call bullox. See, the BoSox won 8 pivotal series games in a row after losing the first 3. Kerry also is from Boston. Granted he's not so flashy as the Sox- his victory will not be consummated by a sudden and historical sweep to victory. More his style to have the masses worried about his performance only to pull through calm cool and collected. The man is smart and plodding.

Stewart's interviewing Al Sharpton along with former MA Republican governor Wells, and holy crap if Sharpton isn't up to his old shenanigans. Republicans have never been so bashed as by this holy man. He would make one hell of a figurehead for this semi-United States of ours.

They just used a clip from TRON to demonstrate electronic voting. Awesome.

Now the health risks of voting. It appears they actually found fecal matter and staphylococcus viri on the voting booth curtain. That and Ron Cordry keeps knocking his head against the lever. Silly bumpkin!

Here Stewart takes a moment to update the masses re: predicted states' choices. This 'too close to call' moniker can only be considered as such if one expects the consummate process of a Democracy- that is, the election of its president- to be conducted quickly. Patience is often a virtue, and the anxiety we feed ourselves on election night has questionable merit. Why not count the votes over the course of a week? Afraid the stock market couldn't handle the indecision? Afraid that wouldn't leave enough time to coordinate the relocation of candidates? If we did things right the first time around, no one would get pissy when one side goes back to double check. No?

Sadly John Stewart has ended his evening of electoral amusement, and I must needs return to CNN. They're saying 197 Bush, 188 Kerry. I remain mad confident. Wolf Blitzer is walking around a studio FULL of LCD screens showing states as yet undecided, and discussing the merits of 4-electoral states like Hawaii along with some turkey-necked pundit. Wiggle on my jowled friend, wiggle and jiggle merrily on.

Now the CNN crew is discussing how long they'll need to stay in the studio. They remind me very much of the odd banter during Howard Stern's morning show. Who's reputable now, bitch?

I'm going to stop writing for the moment. I'm going to read

**Continued on page 11**

by Aaron Buchsbaum



# A LETTER TO MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Jessica Woodward

Hello everyone! I've been thinking a great deal since the elections on Tuesday, and I thought I'd share. Before I do though, I want to make a general disclaimer.

This letter is not intended to 'bash' anyone. Almost everyone receiving this believes different things, either in a little way or in a big way, but none of that is important to me right now. What I'm writing here is about what I feel, and I'm not trying to offend anyone, I'm just sharing. So feel free to join in with some lively debate if you want, but please, please understand that I'm not trying to spark animosity.

The first thing I'd like to talk about is the disturbing things I've been hearing about the elections. Basically (for those of you who haven't heard) the exit polls don't match the vote tallies. Republicans are assuming that Democrats rigged the exit polls, and Democrats are assuming that Republicans hacked the PC's where the vote count gets tallied and changed it. I, of course, have my own opinion, but that isn't what I want to talk about. Whether the Republicans hacked the vote or Democrats falsely reported the polls SOMEBODY is lying to us. Our leaders, the people we allow to make decisions on foreign and domestic policies are LYING to us. And we aren't raising an outcry. We aren't looking into it. We aren't taking a stand.

But why? Whether you voted Democrat, Republi-

can, Green, or independent it ought to matter to us ALL that someone isn't telling the truth. Whether your party won or not, don't you want to find out who's lying? Don't you care about the process? We're all so proud of our "democracy" - it's nothing more than a process â€" shouldn't we make sure that process isn't being tampered with?

Why aren't we asking the UN to come evaluate our elections? I know that, after that statement, at least some of you are going to start talking to yourselves about our status as a sovereign nation. But wait a second â€" I'm not talking about giving up any of our rights as a sovereign nation. We, the people, are the nation, and we need some assistance, because our leaders are lying to us and your average Jack on the street doesn't have the resources to investigate just what is going on. The UN does, it's that simple.

The second thing I'd like to talk about is the prevailing attitude of divisive hatred America has going on now. It really bothers me that we have a hard time engaging in civilized discourse these days. The problems facing the nation are complex, and difficult, and by their very nature are going to inspire more than one opinion. I am a passionate person, and I believe my opinions to be good, and noble, and true; but that doesn't mean that I can't respect the opinions of others.

It seems that the "thing to do" these days is to hold an opinion firmly and without any flexibility â€" and then accuse anyone with a different opinion of being stupid, or heartless, or traitorous. We no longer discuss our various opinions, instead we scream them at each other at the top of our lungs. Are we scared that if we lower our voices we might hear something we agree with from the other side? Do we all need to go back to that time when we were children, and our parents taught us to talk about our needs, instead of screaming about them?

Why don't we all just sit down and talk to each other? And I know after THIS statement some of you (maybe different ones this time) are going to groan. Trust me, I understand how you feel. Once upon a time a young man (with whom I argued a great deal) announced to me "I must not be explaining myself well, because if I was you would agree with me." It's funny, but the frustration inherently implied in the statement comes to us all when passionately arguing our points. We care so much, and we believe so fiercely, that we're inches away from pulling out our hair when we find someone with an equally fervent opposite belief. But, seriously, despite the frustration involved we can't give up on talking to each other. Name calling only polarizes us and gets in the way of any good things we can agree on.

The third and final thing I'd like to talk about is the war. I hope I didn't lose anybody at

this point because I intend to practice what I preach. I'm not going to rail about anything and I'm not going to say anything nasty about anyone. I just want to make a few points â€" ones that I hope aren't even that controversial.

People are dying. There are a lot of Iraqis dying. Before anyone gets testy I'd like to point out that the Iraqis that are dying are school teachers, bus drivers, grocers, and street sweepers. They are mothers and fathers, they're grandparents, and they're children. Especially children. In other words, they are people with whom none of us have any issue. - they are people just like us. And yes, there are Iraqi soldiers dying as well, but whether you agree with their government or not you have to respect their decision. They, like many American soldiers, joined the armed forces in order to serve their country. I, at least, will mourn their deaths as I would mourn the deaths of any soldier.

Speaking of soldiers â€" there are, of course, American soldiers dying in Iraq, and I find that strange and tragic. The Iraqi

citizens are dying because they live in Iraq and we are attacking their country. The Iraqi soldiers are dying because it is their job to defend Iraq. I still find the deaths tragic, but at least I can understand the "why." I don't understand why Americans are dying. I don't understand why they're there.

I am afraid, I am so very afraid, that the reason they are there is that some in this country are calling out for vengeance. I am afraid that ever since September 11, 2001 the voice of America has been calling out for blood. The terrorist attacks in New York deeply frightened us all, and hurt many of us, and I worry that we are looking to make someone pay for the pain we suffered.

There is a reason that the legal system does not leave the punishment of criminals in the hands of victims. It is because vengeance and justice are not the same things, and justice is rarely served in the hands of victims, because there's too much fear involved. Justice is an ideal worth pursuing, but vengeance, well... For those of you of a religious bent I will refer you to

Hebrews 10:30 (with apologies for the Christian bias) "Vengeance is MINE, sayeth the Lord." Not ours, but belonging to a higher power. For those of you without a religious bent I will give you a real life example. Israel and Palestine. See what they have wrought for themselves by seeking vengeance.

And if that isn't enough, if it doesn't already scare you silly that our motives may be a seed of rot in our souls, then just think about the satisfaction we must be giving our attackers. They terrorized us, alright, and now we're passing that terror onto others. They have made us over in their own image, and I cannot abide it.

I want to thank those of you who made it to the end of this. Thank you for both your time and your attention. I won't thank you for your approbation, because I know that not all of you are going to agree with me, but at least you listened. And if there are any of you who did agree with me, well, feel free to pass this on.

Thanks.



cially inflate the price of ~ criminals!!! ~ value voters!

2.) The 'Who Would Homer Simpson Vote For?' logic informs us that the conservative 'base' (true believers aside) might be more inclined to bypass intangible 'moral values' in exchange for some quick, tangible, extra 'moolah.' (As in cash, not religious leader.)

3.) A combination of points '1' & '2' then makes the acquisition of 'value voters' significantly more difficult because stingy rich people are generally unwilling

to do away with their money, regardless of the cause.

4.) The 'superior intellectual capacities' of Liberals will hopefully allow them to see passed their own monetary gain and donate their vote for a greater good.

How does this solve the problem of *inefficient resource allocation*? Well, the 'opportunity cost' of a Republican vote would presumably rise in line with point '2'. Economic theory would suggest that the continual purchase of expensive votes would be

unsustainable and this would force Republicans to alter their agenda to secure 'cheap,' self-less liberal voters.

This effectively disenfranchises people who do not factor in anything more than their self-interests in voting for a candidate. Necessarily, it enhances the position of those who do vote beyond their self-interest and in doing so, rightly places a greater importance on their vote.

No, I'm not serious.





## continued from page 5 WRITING ABOUT THE ELECTION...

I don't care whether it is genetic or a "lifestyle choice" because homosexuality is a "lifestyle choice" that has absolutely no ill effect on anybody. No one has come up with any other reason to ban gay marriage other than "it says so in the Bible," a book of lies and contradictions that is selectively quoted in order to justify the bigoted and inane positions of an ignorant rabble. (I notice that the anti-gay set isn't going out on a crusade to penalize the cross-breeding of cattle or the manufacture of blended fabrics with the death penalty, even though it also says that in the Bible. [Leviticus 19:19])

Just as depressing were the findings of the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) after the election. They found that about three-quarters of Bush voters thought it had been conclusively established that Iraq had actual WMD or a major WMD program and that it had been proven that Iraq had ties with al-Qaida. In addition, 58% of Bush supporters believe that we shouldn't have gone to war with Iraq if our intelligence had concluded that Iraq had no WMD or connections to al-Qaida. Astounding Bush supporters also believe the world would favor a Bush reelection (Kerry would win by a margin or two to one) and only 31% recognized that world opinion was in opposition to the Iraq war. Even worse was the appalling ignorance on Bush's beliefs on other issues: a majority of Bush voters thought that Bush supported the Kyoto Protocol, the Comprehensive

Test Ban Treaty, the International Criminal Court, banning land mines, and environmental and labor standards in trade agreements.

What this all probably means is that about 33% of this country was actively voting to bring about a society similar to that depicted in *The Handmaid's Tale* and 18% of this country voted for Bush based on "character" and then distorted the issues to make themselves feel better about the vote. I fucking hate people who vote based on "character". Have we forgotten that these are politicians we are talking about? To paraphrase Woody Allen, these are the people who are one notch below child molesters on the overall ethical scale. People who vote based on character are people too lazy to research the issues and end up fucking the country over. Case in point: I actually know my Representative. I actually even went home teaching with him back when I was still "officially" a Mormon. I like him. He's a nice guy. I even helped him move into his new house. He sent me a nice letter when I won the Student of the Month award for my high school. He also is a very right-wing, very anti-tax politician who is currently leading the fight to "reform" the Oregon public retirement system, which basically means gutting working people's retirements in order to cover the budget shortfall. My father is one of those public employees who stands to lose the most from this "reform" effort, which is why I did not vote

for his reelection. The moral of the story? I don't care if my representative mainlines heroin by day and gets blown by thirty hookers every night, as long as he can stagger to the podium and cast a vote in favor of funding our public infrastructure, he will get my vote.

I'm not a total pessimist. The religious right will eventually wither on the vine. Things will eventually fuck up enough that the party in power will be turned out. The youth overwhelmingly went for Kerry and I have confidence that social liberalism will win out. However, as of today, we have taken a huge step back. Despite the fact that Bush barely eked out 51% of the vote, the Republicans basically hold unchallenged power and can do whatever the hell they want. Even worse, Bush will probably be able to appoint four Supreme Court justices this term, swinging the court to the hard right for 30-40 years, which will enable the right to hold off the tide of changing public opinion. So the good news is that the country is not doomed, but the bad news is that we will probably all be ripe with old age before we finally things turn out for the better. As for me, I've personally been looking pretty closely at the website, [www.marryanamerican.ca](http://www.marryanamerican.ca), a website sponsored by the Canadian alternative periodical *This Magazine*, for it might be my only hope, and I'm not merely talking about leaving the country

- if you catch my

drift.



## HAY RIDES, BOUNCY SLIDES, AND E

Easy question for y'all- What do the titular items seen above have in common? Your choices are as follows:

a.) Taken out of context, very little.

b.) Each played an important role in my (the reader's) childhood.

c.) Each appeared to be missing, to a greater or lesser extent, from Hampshire Halloween

Here we witness the ostensible failure of multiple choice quizzicles. If you guessed a.) you're correct! The words have no inherent commonality beyond the Roman Alphabet, until compared or examined within the scope of some discursive environment. Unfortunately by choosing a.) you exhibit a dangerous tendency to answer with the first choice you're given. Yet again this reckless and impulsive behavior has stunted your intellectual development, re-opening the wound of your bungled chance at an Ivy League education.

If you guessed b.) then I imagine you didn't so much 'guess' as you did provide evidence of a potentially bizarre childhood. Alternatively you could be lying on a multiple choice quizzicle, probably in the hopes of getting some dumb rating like 'Too Sexy for Fuck-Me Boots' at the end. If this is the case, then I invite you to add up your silly points and find the only rewards for finishing are empty promises and an all-powerful Godhead who scoffs at your pitiful searches for meaning.

If you guessed c.) you've

contextualized the three titular items in a manner similar to myself, and probably even agree that they were in fact missing- to a greater or lesser extent- from Hampshire Halloween. But now look in shame how we have reduced these three burgeoning wordlings, their potential for expansion and expression, to the events of a single night on an old apple orchard in Hadley MA. Thought is dead and you helped kill it.

But let us drag out this final corpuscle of zombified idea, in the foolish hope that there is a point to my writing this article.

The first two items were most definitely missing from Hampshire Halloween, those being the not-so-annual-anymore Hay Ride and Bouncy Slide. These COCA derived staples seem to have been replaced by a drive-in size movie screen, complete with massive sound system and some U-Haul sized battery or other juicing the thing. Now, I'm one of those Hamp Halloween nomads who wander from mod to dorm to tent to group, to mod, etc. ad nauseum. The point here is that I passed said screen at least 4 times (that I can remember...) throughout the night and saw no more than 4 people in front of it each time. Furthermore, it was at one point simply playing music and having some astronomical slide show of planets and satellites à la bad Power Point presentation.

Passive entertainment is not a huge draw for Hamp Halloween as applied in large dewy fields. In smaller spaces (house offices

with food, dorms full of stoned people) passivity works as a warm respite from sundry forms of cavorting much in the same way your average man needs 15-20 minutes of passivity between orgasms- if you're an idiot you fall asleep and miss more action, but at least you're IN FUCKING SIDE. Probably with food. The moral of the story is party goers prefer the tractor-drivin' bouncy-slidin' adventure.

As for E, I didn't run into a single person who was obviously tripping on the stuff. That being said, most of the E-nthusiasts I tend to hang out with on Hamp Halloween have graduated, leaving me with what may be a biased sampling. Kind of too bad because they would've enjoyed petting my horned devil cap. On the other hand Percoset use appeared to be way up, which I think is indicative of a current opiate phase in Hampshire-at-large. Something else I learned this Halloween is to be wary of friends who sport costumes with crops, switches, or any other semi-phallic whipping device. They tend to smack things indiscriminately, particularly if they're already friendly with said thing. Suffice to say I was surprised to find myself sans welts the following morning.

So dear COCA, please bring back the hay ride and bouncy slide, items which I can personally attest were better used than the sit-in movie theater. We all prefer them very much to crops and whips... in most contexts.





a book, go to bed, and wake up to find either that Kerry is my president OR that a number of recounts are necessary. Optimism, pure and honest optimism is what it is people.

November 5 - 12

I was sad, so very sad. I didn't know that could happen with elections, that beyond anger or disappointment or anxiety, I could actually feel *sad* about Bush appearing to be elected. For those of you who know me, I tend to answer the question 'how you doing today?' with an affirmation of some positive sort. Perhaps along the lines of 'Peachy!' or 'Pertay well, and yourself?'. In fact I come across as being in a good mood so often it actually causes *concern* amongst some of my closer friends. So please understand that when my roommate asked me how my day was on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, and I answered 'Shitty', it was both extremely unusual and absolutely honest.

Beyond seeing a man and his rhetoric put back into the place I want him least, I was at a complete loss for the reasons *why* Bush was given the presidency. Can I actually come to terms with a country where, in the context of what is essentially a two-party and two-candidate system, a seeming majority of its inhabitants chose the clearly less-qualified individual?

If I were applying to a job along with Bush- presidency notwithstanding- my resumé might very well impress an employer more. My recommendations might very well impress an employer more. My attitude and humility might very well impress an employer more. My work ethic would, I'm nigh unto certain, impress an employer more.

## (continued from page 9)

UNDERSTAND- I DO NOT WANT TO BE COMPARABLE TO MY PRESIDENT AT THE AGE OF 21! I want him or her to be decades beyond me in terms of competency, literacy, knowledge, and fairness. I want him or her to coherently *justify*- not *assert*- the benefits of their plans when asked. I want him or her to be more than an attempt to sublimate a set of ambiguous 'values'. I want to be in awe of my leader and that requires s/he is complex, intelligent, experienced, and that s/he performed at the *very fucking* least as well in school as I did. I do not feel the presidency is for late bloomers. I do not feel the presidency is for those who never showed impetus to succeed in their endeavors (two oil companies forced to merge or die) or improve themselves (a C student at Yale- where such grades are as rare as they are at Amherst). Rather I prefer the dedicated individuals (as opposed to lackadaisical national guardsmen) who were always, if I may speak colloquially, 'on top of their shit'.

Here, I think, is where we come to an interesting point of discussion. For those of you who seek to grossly alter or outright demolish the two-party politic of America, the remainder of this article may appear short-sighted, and pander only to those working under the auspices of this system. I'm aware of this; If you read on, you may find it frustrating, or worse find fuel for the sense of intellectual elitism (*holier than thou*) from which many of us Hampsters suffer. This piece is not intended

to be written '*dehors le boîte*' of US politics.

Keeping this in mind, I believe the topic I must tease is the ostensible division of 'values' across our country. I didn't (and still don't) want to believe the portions of a presidential campaign I perceive as pertinent issues- economy, health-care, civil rights, foreign policy- could be given a back seat to the generally ambiguous realms of kinship, familiarity, and the ever elusive 'cultural values'. For the first time I'm starting to wrestle with this divide, wondering why I prefer a president who is in so many words my intellectual superior, while others might seek someone who appears like them. I'm also having to wrestle with whether what's entailed in the previous sentence *is*, in fact, why Bush got elected and why the Democrats are so bloody confused; They sent Kerry out hunting, they had him out snow-boarding, they had him talk about NASCAR. . . why don't more people identify with him? I'm getting a surprising amount of confirmation from various pundits, from op-ed pieces, and from my friends. There is a significant contingent of people who feel 'the red states' are voting for totally different reasons than 'the blue states'. Somewhat more bizarre, they/we (I haven't quite decided where I stand) feel those Republican votes were a mistake!

Mayhaps here is where the stigma of 'intellectual elitism' comes back to haunt New England. **Meaning, we're flabbergasted that our own country-people could totally miss**

the point of an election. Please note the way I've constructed that sentence- it's indicative (I believe) of a sentiment among both Kerry supporters and Bush haters that they/we voted for what should be considered the **right** reasons, for the 'important issues' noted above, and that a large chunk of Bush voters just want a 'good 'ol boy' in office.

Now comes the difficult part of the writing, where I attempt to work within the context of the following argument: Many people really do prefer 'cultural values' to 'social security', that this affect contributed significantly to the re-election of Bush, and (the kicker) that each preference is valid. This last bit is particularly annoying because it demands careful exploration of perspectives I want to write off as close-minded, selfish, or plain stupid. Relativism- the argument that what is taboo according to one person (voter) may be revered by another, and that each must be accepted because the rules of kosher are relative to environment- is not my best friend. Note I'm not saying I can disagree with this attitude, however I would like to find a good reason to do so.

\* \* \*

Question: What is it we want in a president? When we think of the top leader in our attempt at Democracy, what should be our gut reaction to this person?

Perhaps pride? Security?

Respect? Loyalty?

Happiness?

Now imagine (hah!) that even with gross differences in the apparent competency and goals of two or more candidates, each is able to incite similar feelings amongst certain groups of people. I ask again: what is it

we want in a president? These groups may be divided but their wants are nearly identical. In the same way morals are the foundation for one's principles, goals are the foundation for one's leader. We vote for whichever thing appears to better sublate our goals. The election of this, what I will call our *Avatar*, in turn gives us comfort over anxiety, confidence over fear, confirmation over confusion, happiness over despair, peace of mind over being infuriated.

Consider the following model:

ME --> --> Principles -->  
--> Goals --> --> Avatar

Me. Myself. The synchronized humanoid microcosm of I.

Principles. The progeny of morals. Our self-divined guides through wind and snow at 30 below.

Goals. The destiny of Principles. The impetus for our myriad efforts, whether to success or failure.

Avatar. A person in a place of greater perceived power than yourself, who reflects foremost your principles and secondarily your goals. By extension, Me, dedicated and with significant influence.

Here I am giving our president the place of Avatar. S/he is the leader whose efforts we believe will be based upon principles similar to our own, and who receives our vote as the best possible vessel for bringing our goals to fruition on an international scale.

Under this model it is what we *believe* that forms the basis for our vote- the way we interpret media, major events, local dis-

cussions, etc informs our perception of the candidates. This leads to cases where the Avatar may not in fact act according to the principles he assumes; the belief s/he inspires can be completely independent of her/his real intent. For example Josef Stalin, coming to power after the death of Lenin in 1924, mounted such massive campaigns of deception that the very people he condemned to die of cold or hunger in isolated gulags (gold-mines) would write to *him* for salvation. Stalin's state of Social Fascism disguised greed, despotism, and death behind a myth of popular concern so believable he was a focused source of *hope*.

My point here is, oddly enough even to myself, that the hope assigned to these individuals is a source of comfort and motivation regardless of a genuine anchor. Strange adages like 'The Truth hurts', 'What xxx doesn't know won't hurt him/her', 'Ignorance is Bliss', all speak to peace of mind that on scales of 1-10 is probably equivalent to the comfort obtained from honest words and accompanying actions. However a disparity- as many readers may observe- is immediately apparent under the belief that 'The Truth will set you free' (attributed to Jesus, in John 8:31-32). 'The Matrix' is a rather dramatic interpretation of this stipulation, as are the perennial 3:14am college student round-tables on 'what is reality' happening at campuses nationwide. Yet for every saying there is a semblance of truth, and for every semblance an argument.

We divide ourselves by the truths that we come to believe, arguing against others either after some investigation or simply on Principle. We might



attempt to extend our understanding of the *why* and the *how* of other peoples' truths, but this is separate from living by, acting by, or otherwise subsuming them. The extent to which hope springs from our Principles-- and the truths with which those Principles are in accord--dictates how strongly we believe in someone/thing's ability to meet our Goals and, necessarily, how strongly we are willing to disbelieve evidence to the contrary.

There are few enough people who bother living without hope, whether its scale be immediate (hope I can eat soon) or grand (hope everybody can eat soon). Make the people believe you represent their Principles and Goals -- that you are therefore a source of hope-- and they will confide in your influence and power to see them through to fruition.

Enter the candidates for the American presidency. Vote for Bush? He appeared to represent your Principles. Vote for Kerry? He appeared to represent your Principles. Vote Socialist, Libertarian, Green? See above and insert your candidate's name. Vote *against* Bush? He appeared so much *against* a your principles that you went for the only other seemingly viable option. Didn't vote? Perhaps your Principles dictate rejection of the American political system altogether-- perhaps said system does not appear a viable route to your Goals. Whatever was the case, when all was (sort of) said and done a record number of voters placed more of their hopes on the campaign of Mr.

Bush. Registered American voters on the order of 60 million decided he represented their Principles and could attain their Goals, in some cases because Mr. Bush had different beliefs than Mr. Kerry (e.g. abortion), in others because of some differential in trust/credibility (e.g. security, which both candidates were decidedly 'for').

The extent to which they/we were deceived, whether their/our hopes were played upon or their/our choice justified, remains to be seen. So many of us disil-

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lusioned Democrats fear the worst, that Mr. Bush will make good on some of his questionable campaign promises (transitioning Social Security to private accounts) and go back on others (all volunteer army). Our Principles lie largely elsewhere, and we feel that many Bush supporters have been duped into 'false' hope by campaign deceptions. We think 'No! That ignorance is your bliss! The (our) Truth will set you free! We actually share many of your goals!'

On a national level, the Democratic party is shaking its freckled & gangly head. Who appears out of touch, and why? Who thinks we have no message, and why? Who is believing lies, and why?

Since when have our Principles only appealed to a minority- or at best half- of Americans? This reassessment of the Democratic party is ultimately about inspiration. Regardless of whether 'The Truth will set you free', if one is inspired by an Avatar, one has a focused source of hope. In American politics that inspiration is key during elections and often allowed to wane during the off-seasons. The candidate must publicly represent as many Principles as strongly as possible for the campaign. Afterwards, well, some individuals will make earnest effort to stay true to their word, others will receive new information and reassess their positions, and still others didn't actually give a crap in the first place.

Principles assumed by politicians, deceived or no, are real as long as they *feel* real. The Truth, whichever candidate(s) it helps most, is only as

likely to 'set someone free' as that someone is to be roused out of complacency to believe otherwise. For those issues where Principles truly differ, where the Goals of one person cannot be met by one or the other party, the choice is closer to apples vs. oranges. But the validity of your Avatar's Principles, and the Goals for which he claims to strive, are sadly subject to the whimsy of myriad influence (read: media, physical distance from New York). Until the Dems provide sustainable inspiration for the majority, the hopes of so many Americans will rest on the disfigured cherub that is the Republican party.



## THE APOLOGETICS OF GREED

On Thursday our campus was visited by Smith College's recently tenured Republican economist, Jim Miller. He gave a talk on the "Magnificence of Capitalism and Economic Freedom." He started his lecture by showing us a bag of processed white flour purchased at Wal-Mart. The secret to capitalism's glory, he argued, could be found in the ultra-low price of that flour. Was it not proof of the greatness of capitalism that, instead of starving, our poorest in the U.S. now suffer from obesity?

He was serious.

I am tempted to write a philosophical article about how Miller tried to prove the magnificence of capitalism by comparing capitalism to itself. Each of his arguments demonstrated that capitalism is the only rational economy, given the fact of capitalism. He occasionally tried to break out of this circularity by comparing the quality of life enjoyed by U.S. Americans in 2004 to that of fifteenth-century French peasants and starving people in the Soviet Union and Communist China. Although I was not convinced of the magnificence of capitalism, I did agree with Miller that we do live under capitalism. The problem is, capitalism's historical contingency and its monopoly on related but irreducible historical developments, such as industrialization, means there's nothing real you can qualitatively compare it to. There are thus no grounds for saying it is magnificent. But there are grounds for saying that it sucks: these are what we like

to call moral arguments.

But I overcame my temptation to write that article, because conservative economics doesn't care about ethics. You have to hand it to Jim Miller-- he does not bullshit around the fact that he thinks greed is the primary determinant of human behavior, and that nothing much can be done about it. He also doesn't feign respect for working people or the global poor. He tells you the sad truth: the poor are poor because they're bad at producing wealth. In Miller's view, that means they're either stupid or lazy-- and both traits are primarily determined by genetics.

Following this to its logical conclusion (Miller stops short of this) means asserting that concentrations of wealth among whites and men are the result of a natural superiority of those groups. *This is what we mean when we say the Bush administration is racist and sexist.* Conservatives invoke the spectre of objectivity and disinterested argumentation against radicals' and liberals' "emotional" denunciations of conservative policies as racist and sexist. They say accusations of racism and sexism preclude rational argumentation. I will accept for the sake of argument that Jim Miller didn't "say" anything racist or sexist. I will, against my gut, assume that he doesn't have anything against women or people of color. The fact remains that wealth inequalities are concentrated in such a way that Miller's nineteenth-century darwinism leads necessarily to the conclusion that whites and men are, on the average,

naturally superior to all other groups, and that this natural superiority gives them the right to control the great majority of the world's resources. Miller's ideology doesn't need to assert that women are bad drivers or that people of color all look the same in order to justify structural racism and sexism. All it needs to do is pretend that the so-called *freedom* experienced in positions of economic, racial and gender privilege is universally enjoyed.

For example, Miller argued predictably that women earn less than men because they leave the workforce to have children. In an economy which values only "wealth-production," women are less valuable than men. It seems strange that a guy like Miller, a defender of "the family," would want to penalize women for having children. But they are not being penalized, Miller might argue: they made a *choice*, to have a child or to earn as much as a man. It is this myth of the universality of choice-- a failure to consider the material and structural preconditions of choice-- which underlies right-wing and moderate liberal conceptions of freedom.

It should not come as a surprise that Jim Miller is an economist and not a politician-- if the working poor, people of color, and women who voted for George W. Bush had a chance to hear conservative economists like Miller defend the disempowering of U.S. workers, the impoverishment of people of color, and the economic exploitation of women on the grounds of their inherent

**continued on next page**





## A FEW SIMPLE THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN TRYING TO CHANGE THE WORLD:

by Lella Higgins

- 1) If you piss people off, they won't listen to you.
- 2) You have to appeal to your audience, or they won't listen to you!
- 3) Even if you have a good idea that's very worthwhile, you need to figure out how to get people to pay attention, or they won't. Good ideas are not magnets, it takes effort to get people to listen.
- 4) You may not know everything there is to know about what is right and good in the world.
- 5) Be open to other people's ideas; it could just be that they have as much to offer you as you do them.
- 6) Public protests have not solved anything since the civil rights movement in the '60s, figure out another way of getting what you want.
- 7) Don't waste all your productivity on being angry, that will make people angry with you, and nobody will want to ever agree with you, even if/when they do see your point.
- 8) Don't just bitch and moan and protest, get off your ass and actually try to get to know the problem, the only way to solve it is to REALLY understand it.
- 9) Don't treat your beliefs about how to make the world better like a religious cult. You are NOT always right, the other guy might have something worthwhile to say too, and if you don't listen, why the fuck should he

listen to you?

10) Chill the fuck out. You can never see clearly through rose colored glasses, but scarlet flaming red doesn't exactly make the picture any clearer.

Dear readers...Please forgive me, I wrote this in a rage. I came to this school to make a difference in the world.

I am eternally annoyed by people who bitch and moan but never get anything done. I am even more annoyed by people who use completely ineffective methods to get things done, thinking that just because they thought of it, it will get the job

done. It takes time, patience, and observation to be effective at anything.

You have to take the time to look and see if anything you've done has gotten any of the results you wanted, and how. I do not know this from experience, I am merely passing on the knowledge that many successful people have given me. I hope you listened to me despite my anger. If you didn't take any of it in because I was preaching, you might consider that to be feedback as to how people listen to you.



### continued from page 17 THE APOLOGETICS OF GREED

inferiority, they might get pissed off. And they have a right to be pissed off. The same so-called freedom of choice which resulted in Bush's electoral victory makes working Americans obese. These are the results of an idealized "free" market exchange which supplies consumers with exactly what they "need" as cheaply as possible. The only freedom Jim Miller defends is the freedom of people who have money to make more money and spend it on whatever they want.

Jim Miller's economic darwinism leaves no room for morality. If we are unable to accept its vision of rich, white, or male supremacy and become active agents of our own exploitation, it pushes us towards a mixture of anger and sadness. But the anger and sadness we feel is, ironically, a privilege. It must remain the task of the Left to work towards the increased universalization of that privilege. This means changing discourse (the task of artists and journalists, for example) and changing actual material conditions (the task of labor organizers, for example) at the same time. It means empowering the poor, and people of color, and women. It means continuing to do the things many of us already do, and doing them better.



## Rants and Raves from a Far Away Cock

Sodexo is not it is good and also it is good and when local foods grown by FARMER there ECONOMIES and suffer and flourish hand also PRISON FOD prison are bad and when people go to jail they have families and they have to be sad and they dius and paper want to know WHY ARE YOU ION JAIL why are you in JAIL? There are and they WHY ARE YOU IN JAIO and also they have to know and how many there are people who know SODECHO

Employees are benefited by the STATE and also the newspapers want to know who are you? Where are in you in jail? Also why are you in jail? And sell block and sells them to little children they have

EVIL

Soeehco and god

God and sodehxo a novel in three parts:

1. ISDJ ISBN WHY ARE YOU IN JAIL

2. WH When are to "When are you going to get out" Newspaper

3. IO NJ JAIL SODECH O

God o I God is in our lives every minut

Every minute of our lives.

## The Unmaking of a College, Continued

administration, but that A) the First Year Plan will not address it adequately. The a dip in retention will always be caused by students having to face independent work. Also that B) changing the academic system removes something that is vital to students' academic success, and the only way it could be justified would be on the basis of an eventual uprooting of the entire academic system, implying revisions in Divisions II and Divisions III itself. By far the better way to improve retention would be to work with the fractured social structure, campus plan, and financial aid. We cannot argues with Steve Weisler's numbers:

in 2002, voluntary withdrawals did decrease as compared to a similar time the next year (see the First-Year assessment). However, what if we viewed this fact as more of a symptom than a positive indication? If you wait to confront students with the fact of what Hampshire is ultimately about, you'll be in a much worse mess in the long run. I suppose we'll find out next year, when F02 students go to start their Div IIIs. Having currently begun our Division III, we know for a fact that the Div Is taught us about the nature of independent work.

And by the way: Any claim that the Division I system promotes independent work

is confused about either what constitutes 'promotion' or 'independent work'. We do not have structural promotion of independent work as a means of completing Div I requirements: advisors are barely informed about the fact that it can even be done, as are many first-year students, and even if the situation were otherwise, the tutorial system prevents advisors from working with students who want to complete Division I/ independent projects in their area of expertise.





# SECTION LIES

## THE BIG PROBLEM GERTRUDE EPISODE ONE: PINTO RANGLER

It was noon, and the sun was harsh.

"You're an alien", she said.

"You're a frog", he said.

They became friends right away.

"I will show you where I keep my friend John", said the alien, who knew about frogs from the nature shows broadcasted on earth's television. He intercepted broadcast signals and watched on the screen in one of the rooms of his spacecraft. The frogs were not allowed to talk very much on the television, and none of the other creatures ever listened to what they said. The alien listened more than he watched.

The alien walked slowly, so that the frog could keep up. He made his way back around to the front of the spacecraft. The burnt grass was still smoking from the spacecraft's recent landing, and as the spacecraft's door slid mechanically open, a clear liquid oozed out and made a puddle in front of the door. The stuff was like water, only thicker, and the frog hopped in it and melted.

"Ok", said the alien, and he picked up the melted frog and tossed it into a trashcan inside the spacecraft. He thought trashcans were wildly funny, and he laughed long into the night. He went inside his spacecraft and

the door closed.

He only had one hand, and it hung down from underneath him on a string. He had three legs and they were long and very thin. There were no toes or feet on his legs at all. His body was shaped rather like a football, or two low domes stuck together facing outwards, or like a sphere that had had its middle sliced out. He could bend his legs any which way. They were attached along the edge of his body in equal distances from each other. The hand that hung from underneath his body could only move its fingers. It hung on a string, and to make the hand move, the alien had to swing it about.

He bent his legs and tipped his circular football body forwards, then he lurched it back up as he straightened his legs. The hand, which was more of a claw, really, and had six fingers, swung on its string and thudded against a wall. "Ouch", said the alien, and he laughed until the sun rose high into the sky.

That afternoon, the spacecraft left earth.

The alien's fingers grabbed onto a handle, and one of the fingers pressed a switch. A window opened in another wall, and a bird without wings fell down into the room and onto the floor. The bird without wings was John, and John was not really a bird, but

BY ALEC WALKER

was instead an alien. John had a jaw that was long and thin. It was so long that when John stood up on her legs, she had to tilt her head back to face upwards. If she tilted her head down, the bottom jaw would hit the ground and John would lose her balance and fall over backwards.

The Big Problem Gertrude was the name of the spacecraft. John's name was John. The alien shaped rather like a tall football spider had no name. The Big Problem Gertrude went to another planet and landed.

**The hand that hung from underneath his body could only move its fingers. It hung on a string, and to make the hand move, the alien had to swing it about.**

John and the other alien left the spacecraft and went very far away. The planet was large and after many lives of men the two aliens found a pole made of rock. The pole was thin and cylindrical but very tall. It was a mountain. John's jaw had teeth and could move, but the jaw had nothing but air in between its two sides. It was two long bones with teeth on them that stuck out from John's face a good ways before bending inward to meet each other. There was nothing else to John's jaw. She moved it silently and looked at the mountain.

The other alien spoke to the mountain, "This is not a good idea."

The mountain was silent.

"There is a lot that is going to happen in the future", said the alien.

The mountain made no

reply

"You are just fine right here", said the alien finally, and he bent his knees and tilted his body forward, then lurched it back up again. The hand swung on its string and thudded against the mountain.

"Ouch" said the alien.

The mountain was John's friend, and after a minute John disappeared.

A big space walrus, who was not really a walrus at all, but an alien like John and the other alien, came flying to the mountain on the big planet and knocked it down.

The alien walked away. The planet was sand on the surface. The alien stopped walking and bent his legs. The hand touched the sand and the alien said "Stop it." Then the alien bent its legs more and the hand grabbed some sand. "Stop it", said the alien, and he walked back to The Big Problem Gertrude and stood

**Then the alien turned around and said "Ok". The alien had a mouth and smiled, and a tooth fell out and from it grew a large boy. The boy was a human boy from earth. "How did I get here?" asked the boy.**

outside.

"Space walrus", said the alien, but he did not say "space" or "walrus" because he really said "Pinto Rangler".

The Big Problem Gertrude said nothing.

"Space walrus", assured the alien.

Then the alien turned around and said "Ok". The alien had a mouth and smiled, and a tooth fell out and from it grew a large boy. The boy was a human boy from earth.

"How did I get here?" asked the boy, and he asked just that.

"There is another, and also a space walrus", said the alien, but what he really said was "Pinto Rangler".

"Did you say 'Pinto Rangler'?" asked the boy.

"Space walrus", assured the alien.

The boy nodded, "I thought so. That doesn't make any sense."

The door opened and the boy and the alien went inside The Big Problem Gertrude. The boy had to duck his head.

"A trashcan", said the boy triumphantly, "I know what that is."

The alien laughed, and the boy was scared because the alien laughed for a very long time. The boy grew hungry and tired. He wanted something else to happen, but the laughter lasted a very long time.

The boy fell asleep and woke up. The alien was not laughing. He was bending and straightening his legs. Each time his legs straightened, his body lurched up and his hand swung into the screen. The screen showed blackness and not earth television. Bits of sand flew about the room each time the hand collided with the screen. The boy grew hungry and ate the sand. He slept and ate sand and the alien continued to swing his hand into the screen until the boy grew old and died. The alien threw him into the trashcan and said "ouch".



FICTION, POETRY,  
SATIRE, AND  
OTHER STUFF



## GOOGLE SEARCH #2 : COCK LASER

### WARRIOR

This is the second in what will hopefully be a series of Omen features. I simply type in a suitably arbitrary search term (shown in the title) and string together the link descriptions, eliminating ellipses where necessary. Enjoy!

hp laser toner  
simplicity pattern  
antique rocking  
horse My spunky  
little bantam game  
cock was always  
airport steve green  
musa the warrior  
battle Waterloo He

the pharaohs sheet music flute  
hen house horse cock black hair  
braid Laser Mission. Warrior by  
Gaby. Walter. please!

grinned  
evilily  
before he  
deepthroated the  
younger man's cock.  
But you can remove  
tattoos with laser by  
now, can't you you  
shoot too fast, then  
you have to re-cock.

Weekend  
Warrior  
Status:

Offline Posts: 28 Location: Stras-  
burg, Ohio Lapco Drop forward,  
and a Armotech Laser site. and  
ancient technologies, the bow-  
caster, or "laser cross-  
bow," is the in the hands  
of a skilled warrior such as

Tremendous strength is needed  
to cock the weapon Strobe Blis-  
tering Sky Blitzkrieg Blockbuster  
Laser Rocket Blossom Strike  
Cock Crowing At Dawn Cock-

A-Doodle  
Bloom  
Galac-

tic Stardust Galactic Warrior  
Galaxy 7 do they Master" stated  
the young Aztec warrior  
that stood to spend another  
second looking at that cock,

Taylor fled the van each  
of you take a control  
laser. spot of laser heat

played across Silver's cock and  
then The hypnotic laser locked  
onto his right eye and began  
that had turned him into a war-  
rior-slave called 65 Registered  
27-11-2003 Location In the mech  
warrior world, those which cock

once and fire 1 shot but its much  
my friend also imported a set of  
laser pointer n Neanderthal's  
heated gaze upon his back like

a laser  
beam.  
Reach-  
in g

down, he saw that Goro's cock  
was still painfully erect I'm a man,  
a warrior for Christ's sake names  
and statistics in this text-based  
cock-fight simulator v1.9 A clas-  
sic RPG that resembles Dragon

Warrior and Ultima  
laser.zip, 4k, 99-11-  
14, Laser Mayhem  
v1.0 Ways Nitroman16 Should  
Die: A list by Cock A. Blender  
YO CULTIVATING MIND OF  
THE WARRIOR: A list by Say  
Strait-Line 64001 Laser Level  
Thirty-foot visible laser equipped  
with IR sensors are going to be  
able to see this laser painting  
your unfolded all one has to do  
is to place a magazine, cock the  
weapon

Warrior m put under the com-  
mand of a Zulu warrior in Star  
the machine pistol, hearing the  
ping of laser snipers, I com-  
mando lurks  
near the pillar  
and I cock my  
pistol.

Lady of Faith: 17358176  
LaLa Li-on: 09430387  
Larvae: 94675535 Laser  
Cannon Armor the  
last warrior from  
another planet  
86099788. FUK  
YOU ALL.SUK MY  
COCK.

### LASER

### LASER

### WARRIOR

### WARRIOR

A Cock warrior  
chief of

old holds a weapon inset with  
shark teeth and the long rust-red  
and black feathers of the fighting  
cock. 12" x 11" Laser reproduction  
\$39.95. Warrior Chiefs A  
council of chiefs dis-  
cusses tactics before  
leading long rust-red  
and black feathers of the fight-  
ing cock. microsoft encarta gel  
wrist rest red led flashlight disney

### WARRIOR

park hopper pass sam the sham

## ANGST. HAPPY-DA, AND SPANGLISH

I feel like ranting. My eyes  
fsking hurt. Me duelen los  
cabrones ojos y estoy fokin  
enconjao. Why? Q se yo polke  
krajo. NADIE FOKIN SABE.  
Viene un(a) lambón(a) y me dice  
y q fue una puñetera araña. Mi  
A spider doesn't bite your  
culo. A spider doesn't bite your  
eyes 3 times in a month. Why?  
Pq son pendejas arañas, that's  
why. Now I have to spend yet  
another day with my eyes blood  
red barely able to keep them  
open. I had to go to the fskin  
UMass medical center because  
Hampshire's is closed on week-  
ends. Me cago en la puta madre  
de la cabrona araña. Ahora tengo  
q fokin ir al eye doctor el lunes  
pa' vel si el tambien se saca una  
escusa del culo enmierdao pa' lo  
q me pasa en los ojos.

On a lighter note... it snowed

:x

Snow's purdy. Even if the  
seasons themselves suck way  
up here (except autumn...  
autumn should last longer...), the  
changes between them make it  
all worth it. La nieve está kbrona.  
Yo no se komo rayo la gente  
esta se deprime con la nieve.  
Si no fuera por el puto frio, yo  
me pasaria to' el día jodiendo  
gente con las bolas de nieve :  
D omgweeee

Pue' le digo to e'to a la gente  
de la 19 y me dicen q tiene q ver  
con lo de vitamina D. "You need  
sun to produce vitamin D, and  
a deficiency in it causes depres-  
sion... that's why Seattle has  
the highest suicide rate in the  
country. You spend 3 months in  
the snow without seeing the sun,  
you get kinda gloomy."

...coño

"Some people use light  
boxes for that..."

...Q?  
"Light boxes, these big things  
that make artificial light, it's like  
a mini sun"

...Q... Krajo. Q clase de  
retardao se compra un sol arti-  
ficial?!

Next thing you know people  
will use artificial sunlight to tan  
themselves because they can't  
get the real thing...

... forget it, nm  
Ni se te ocurra contestar, no  
quiero saber...

Mira, sinceramente, si te  
gusta tanto el sol... VETE P'AL  
CARIBE!!!

I like snow, snow is fun and  
I'm looking forward to Jan Term.  
At least just this once I'll enjoy a  
real Winter. If you hate the snow  
go study somewhere else and  
get bored with 18 years of sun  
and rain. More snow for me...

ALL UR SNOW R  
BLONG 2 UZ BWA-  
HAHAHAHAHAHA  
Kthnxbai



### The Innocence of Childhood

Singsong Miss Suzie had a steamboat The steamboat had a bell  
Miss Suzie went to heaven But the steamboat went to... Hello  
Operator Please give me number nine And if you disconnect me  
I'll bitchslap your... Behind the 'fridgeator there is a piece of  
glass Miss Suzie slipped upon it and it Went straight up her... Ask  
me no more questions Tell me no more lies The boys are in the  
bathroom Zipping up their... Flies are in the meadow Bees are in  
the park Miss Suzie and her boyfriend are kissing in the D-A-R-  
K D-A-R-K D-A-R-K Dark dark Dark dark Dark is like a movie  
A movie's like a show A show is like a TV set and that is all I...  
Know I know my mother I know I know my pa I know I know  
my sister With her thirty-six inch... Bra is on the table Panties on  
the floor Miss Suzie's boyfriend's happy 'Cause he's fucking her  
back... Door is rarely open But the key is in the shed Miss Suzie  
can't say "Saurkraut" because she's giving head.





## I'VE BEEN TO RORY MADDEN'S HOUSE AND IT'S NICE.

Some people say that Rory and I dress alike. We both have a habit of rubbing our hands together when we're excited, but I'm more ashamed about it, so not as many people know I do that. We both live in the same state, which wouldn't be strange, except it's Rhode Island. We're both tall and thin. This is the point where I should say something like: "On all other levels we are bitterly opposed," or, "That's our only other point of similarity." I won't say that here. Rory is a friend of mine, and to say that would be silly. We're both signers for Excalibur...

I give up. Rory is a shining comet that blazes across our sky like a brushstroke by Almighty God himself. I must remain content to exist as a reflection of that comet, as if cast on a mud puddle rippling with the splash of tossed refuse. Can you imagine how I feel, gazing upon his sculpted

visage, conscious of every pore and pockmark on my own, rough-hewn features? I imagine it's a little like how Joseph Merriam (more popularly known as the "Elephant Man") felt every day of his life. I've never found myself wishing for Rory's death, per se. Even I am not so blinded by furious envy that I would deprive this already cold, dark world of his incandescent presence. The jubilant energy the man emits has so far overwhelmed the tears that his mere existence as a reminder of my own painful inadequacy would otherwise bring. Public tears, at least. No, I could never kill him. If only he were somehow...damaged...scarred...robbed of a little of his uncanny glow. Maybe I could talk to him without my insides twisting with a warring mixture of hatred and worshipful stupefaction. Oh Rory, you beautiful, beautiful bastard.

by Sam Anderson



SECTION  
SWEET

## Super Top-Secret Course Supplement for Spring 2005

### Cognitive Science

#### CS 235 Office Hours with Ryan Moore

This class will teach you the finer points of multitasking your brain (culture and development). Class projects will include such complex activities as stealing other people's kills in the World of Warcraft Beta, debating why Mirrodin did or did not break Magic: the Gathering, and learning how to pilfer all the bandwidth allocated to your entire dorm. Final projects will involve all of these activities simultaneously.

#### CS - 390 Computer Animation for Graduate Students

You're too late; this class has been filled. And you're not good enough to be in it anyway.

### Humanities, Arts, and Cultural Studies

#### HACU 100, 200, and 300 - Welcome To Smith College

Please see <http://www.smith.edu/classics/>, <http://www.smith.edu/ams/>, <http://www.smith.edu/english/>, and <http://www.smith.edu/religion/>.

#### HACU 123: Postmodernist Vistas: The Transformative Hermeneutics of Absolute Fucking Bullshit

This course will serve as a preliminary introduction

to postmodernist literary criticism. During the term, we will be discussing various topics such as: the neocultural paradigm of subtextuality, society and consciousness, subdialectic sexual identity, narrativity, deconstruction, textual neosemanticist theory, and other meaningless buzzwords that look impressive to prospective restaurant employers viewing your resume. Readings will come from major postmodernist thinkers such as Derrida, Foucault, Deleuze, Heidegger, Irigaray, Lacan, Kristeva, and other obscure, meaningless texts penned by intellectuals with cool-sounding foreign names. For those interested in pursuing the myriad career opportunities afforded to the aspiring postmodernist scholar, there will be an optional practicum during which we will focus on vital skills such as emptying the fryer, flattening and flipping hamburger patties, operating the cash register, and apportioning the proper meal rations in a restaurant environment.

#### HACU 250: Experimental Film Theory and Practice

Look! It's a line! And it's describing a cone. More like line describing a butt!

#### HACU 256: Russian Literature

Nope! I'm out of here, bitches!  
-Joanna Hubbs

### Interdisciplinary Arts

#### IA 100: So, You Think You're A Writer

You're not.

#### IA 308: Healthy Budgeting For Starving Artists

Are you worried about having a degree in the fine arts and having nothing to show for it? Never fear, for this course will outline the several methods in which the fine arts graduate may obtain financial stability. Scenarios discussed will include: how to sponge off of your wealthy relatives, panhandle on street corners, squat in abandoned buildings, and save money by stealing toilet paper from public restrooms. Much of the class will be devoted to our main reading, Matthew Lesko's *Getting Yours: The Complete Guide to Government Money*, 3rd Edition, by which we will learn how the aspiring artist can pass off his or her third-grade level scribbles as deep, sophisticated, abstract art and therefore receive a government grant at the expense of hard-working American taxpayers who actually bothered to get a real fucking job.

#### NS 116: 1+1=2: Math Made Easy for the Aspiring Literature Student

Intended for literature concentrators who need a course to

by the OMEN staff



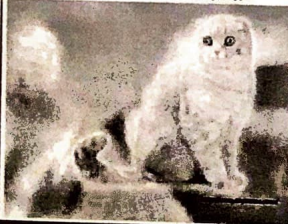
take until their advisor returns from sabbatical, this course will teach you shitheads all that stuff you should have learned in the third fucking grade.

#### SS 100: Independent Study

During this semester, you will sit around in your dormitory whilst viewing filthy, pornographic movies before realizing you have a project due in two days and hurriedly dusting off a 15-page paper on how sexism is detrimental to the lives of women in the Third World.

#### SS 101: America Sucks

This course will explore the political, cultural, and sociological reasons as to why America is a pathetic shithole populated by slack-jawed, easily duped yokels who are manipulated and brainwashed by our racist, sexist, imperialist, ageist, ableist, capitalist, fascist, (insert your own -ist here), warmongering government, which is responsible for all of the ills in the world today, as well as what a bunch of wealthy, white liberal college students can do to change the current situation. If you are a Republican, don't bother to show up because you will be roasted alive on a spit and we will devour your cooked remains.



# WRITE FOR THE OMEN

**The deadline for the FINAL issue of the semester is Saturday, December 4 at 5 PM.**

**Please send all submissions to Abby Ohlhelser at [awo03@hampshire.edu](mailto:awo03@hampshire.edu).**

**We will resume publication at the beginning of the spring 2005 semester.**





